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STATE FOR IIP/G/WHA CBARONE, GADAMS; IIP-ECA/IT/PBAT FOR SMAZER; IIP/G/CP FOR RCARL; IIP/T/GIC FOR JBOCHNER; IIP/T/SV FOR CAPONTE; WHA/PDA FOR EDETTER, TPICKREL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: OEXC OPRC OIIP KPAO NS

SUBJECT: REPORTING CABLE: MEDIA TRAINING BY DEBORAH POTTER

REF: 06 PARAMARIBO 774

¶1. Project/Tracker No.: 26879

¶2. Project Name: IIP Speaker &Media Ethics8

¶3. MPP Goal Addressed: Democracy

¶4. Brief Project Description

Deborah Potter, Executive Director of Newslab, an online resource center for journalists in Washington, visited Suriname from September 6-9, 2006 to conduct journalism ethics workshops. During her stay in Suriname Potter provided 50 journalists representing twenty-three media outlets with training on the importance of the role of the free press in a democratic society, as well as on making correct decisions within the profession. Potter's workshops supported the Mission Performance Plan democracy goals: to promote the development of a more analytical media to serve as a watchdog of the government, to foster critical thinking among citizens, and to encourage good governance, the rule of law, and more accountability and transparency in public institutions.

¶5. Audience Reached

a. Journalists: In Nieuw Nickerie twenty-six local journalists participated in a one-day workshop. Topics included the role of the media in society, the relation between media and government, defamation, and codes of ethics. In Paramaribo twenty-four journalists participated in the workshop. The Charge d'Affaires officially opened the Paramaribo workshop, and at the end of both the participants received certificates for their participation.

b. General Public: Both in Nickerie as well as in Paramaribo Potter delivered public lectures in addition to her workshops. In Nickerie twenty-five people attended and in Paramaribo twenty-three. At both events the vast majority of those present were working journalists. Lively discussion followed Potter's introductory remarks at both public events.

¶6. Results

a. Participants: Potter was well received and enthusiastically praised by the participants. Potter adjusted the content of her workshops to the Surinamese context, addressing the situations and problems faced by

Surinamese journalists, thereby making the sessions particularly interesting for the local audience. Potter's experience was also evident, and her ability to deliver a quality program despite flight delays and local travel to and from Nickerie was appreciated. We highly recommend her for future PD programming.

b. Media coverage: Potter's presence in Suriname received extensive media attention. Her arrival was announced in one daily, and all three local TV stations in Nickerie reported the opening and closing of the workshop. All three stations also broadcast separate interviews with Ms. Potter. In Paramaribo, the opening of the workshop by the Charge d' Affaires was covered by three TV stations, all four daily newspapers, and two radio stations. A twenty minute interview with Ms. Potter was broadcast on a popular radio station.

c. Impact: Potter's visit opened up further opportunities for Post to deepen its ties with the media. A subsequent media training (reftel) built on Potter's themes. In addition, EmbOffs took advantage of a recent visit to Nickerie to host a roundtable with journalists and distribute an IIP brochure written by Potter. The event generated favorable press coverage. Post is planning a similar roundtable for Paramaribo.

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